FDI in Mining Sector

4041. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that Foreign Investment Promotion Board has approved 60 applications amounting to about Rs. 3,467 crores for Foreign Direct Investment in the mining sector; and

(b) if so, the details of the proposal cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS (DR. SHRIMATI RITA VERMA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) has approved 60 applications for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the mining sector amounting to about Rs. 3467 crores upto 31-3-2000. The proposals cleard include 11 from Australia, 8 each from U.K. and USA, 6 from South Africa, 5 from Canada, 2 each from Korea, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, Sweden, the balance being 1 proposal each from other countries.

De-Nationalisation of Coal Industry

4042. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to de-nationalise the coal mining industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when the proposed measure will be put into effect;

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken to safeguard the interests of the vast manpower engaged in the coalmines;

(d) whether the State-owned coal companies would be permitted to form joint ventures with private companies to exploit mines for the purpose of exploration of coal and lignite; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA] : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of the answer to part (a) of the question.

(d) and (e) The Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2000 proposes to induct a new provision in the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 for non-captive coal and lignite mining as well as exploration of coal and lignite resources by the Indian companies. The proposal does not involve privatisation of any of the existing coal mines of Coal India Limited or of Singareni Collieries Comipany Limited (SCCL).

Negative Growth Rate of Coal

4043. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that coal production showed a negative growth rate of minus five per cent for the year 1999-2000;

(b) whether this has resulted in the import of coal from other countries; and

(c) if so, what Government's views are on this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS (DR. SHRIMATI RITA VERMA) : (a) No, Sir. The all India coal production during the year 1999-2000 is of the order 299.00 million tonnes (Provisional) against the production of 292.27 million tonnes during the year 1998-99, showing a growth of 2.3%.

(b) and (c) As indicated in the reply to part (a) of the question, the year 1999-2000 did not witness negative growth in coal production. Coal import is however resorted to by consumers on grounds of price consideration at certain locations, calorific value and quality considerations.

Losses incurred by CCL

4044. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Coalfields Ltd. has been incurring losses;

(b) if so, since when and the amount of losses sustained by CCL annually;

(c) whether CCL was earning profit in the past;

(d) if so, why the CCL is incurring losses now; and

(e) the steps taken to improve the efficiency of CCL?